



U.S. overdose deaths topped 100,000 in one year, officials say

NEW YORK (AP) — An estimated 100,000 Americans died of drug overdoses in one year, a never-before-seen milestone that health officials say is tied to the COVID-19 pandemic and a more dangerous drug supply.

Overdose deaths have been rising for more than two decades, accelerated in the past two years and, according to new data posted Wednesday, jumped nearly 30% in the latest year.

President Joe Biden called it "a tragic milestone" in a statement, as administration officials pressed Congress to devote billions of dollars more to address the problem.

"This is unacceptable and it requires an unprecedented response," said Dr. Rahul

Gupta, director of National Drug Control Policy.

Experts believe the top drivers of overdose deaths are the growing prevalence of deadly fentanyl in the illicit drug supply and the COVID-19 pandemic, which left many drug users socially isolated and unable to get treatment or other support. The number is "devastating," said Katherine Keyes, a Columbia University expert on drug abuse issues. "It's a magnitude of overdose death that we haven't seen in this country."

Drug overdoses now surpass deaths from car crashes, guns and even flu and pneumonia. The total is close to that for diabetes, the nation's No. 7 cause of death.

Continued on next page



This photo provided by Nancy Sack shows Carter Lange, Kim Gustavson, Jason Lange, Matthew Gustavson and Travis Gustavson.

Associated Press

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Continued from Front

Drawing from the latest available death certificate data, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that 100,300 Americans died of drug overdoses from May 2020 to April 2021. It's not an official count. It can take many months for death investigations involving drug fatalities to become final, so the agency made the estimate based on 98,000 reports it has received so far.

The CDC previously reported there were about 93,000 overdose deaths in 2020, the highest number recorded in a calendar year. Robert Anderson, the CDC's chief of mortality statistics, said the 2021 tally is likely to surpass 100,000.

"2021 is going to be terrible," agreed Dr. Daniel Ciccarone, a drug policy expert at the University of California, San Francisco.

The new data shows many of the deaths involve illicit fentanyl, a highly lethal opioid that five years ago surpassed heroin as the type of drug involved in the most overdose deaths. Dealers have mixed fentanyl with other drugs — one reason that deaths from metham-



This photo provided by Nancy Sack shows from left, Kim Gustavson, Matthew Gustavson, Isaac Gustavson, Travis Gustavson, and Carter Lange.

Associated Press

phetamines and cocaine also are rising.

Drug cartels in Mexico are using chemicals from China to mass produce and distribute fentanyl and meth across America, said Anne Milgram, administrator of the Drug Enforcement Administration.

This year, the DEA has seized 12,000 pounds of fentanyl, a record amount, Milgram said. But public health experts and even police officials say that law enforcement measures will

not stop the epidemic, and more needs to be done to dampen demand and prevent deaths.

The CDC has not yet calculated racial and ethnic breakdowns of the overdose victims.

It found the estimated death toll rose in all but four states — Delaware, New Hampshire, New Jersey and South Dakota — compared with the same period a year earlier. The states with largest increases were Vermont (70%), West Vir-

ginia (62%) and Kentucky (55%).

Minnesota saw an increase of about 39%, with estimated overdose deaths rising to 1,188 in May 2020 through April 2021 from 858 in the previous 12-month period.

The area around the city of Mankato has seen its count of overdose deaths rise from two in 2019, to six last year to 16 so far this year, said police Lt. Jeff Wersal, who leads a regional drug task force.

"I honestly don't see it getting better, not soon," he said.

Among the year's victims was Travis Gustavson, who died in February at the age of 21 in Mankato. His blood was found to show signs of fentanyl, heroin, marijuana and the sedative Xanax, Wersal said.

Gustavson was close to his mother, two brothers and the rest of his family, said his grandmother, Nancy Sack. He was known for his easy smile, she said. "He could be crying when he was a little guy, but if someone smiled at him, he immediately stopped crying and smiled back," she recalled. Gustavson first tried drugs as kid and had been to

drug treatment as a teenager, Sack said. He struggled with anxiety and depression, but mainly used marijuana and different kinds of pills, she said.

The morning of the day he died, Travis had a tooth pulled, but he wasn't prescribed strong painkillers because of his drug history, Sack said. He told his mother he would just stay home and ride out the pain with ibuprofen. He was expecting a visit from his girlfriend that night to watch a movie, she said.

But Gustavson contacted Max Leo Miller, also 21, who provided him a bag containing heroin and fentanyl, according to police.

Some details of what happened are in dispute, but all accounts suggest Gustavson was new to heroin and fentanyl.

Police say Gustavson and Miller exchanged messages on social media. At one point, Gustavson sent a photo of a line of a white substance on a brown table and asked if he was taking the right amount and then wrote "Or bigger?"

According to a police report, Miller responded: "Smaller bro" and "Be careful plz!"



In this Feb. 25, 2015 file photo, the Homeland Security Department headquarters in northwest Washington.

Associated Press

Iran-backed hackers accused of targeting critical U.S. sectors

Hackers linked to the Iranian government have been targeting a "broad range of victims" inside the United States, including by deploying ransomware, according to an advisory issued Wednesday by American, British and Australian officials.

The advisory says that in recent months, Iran has exploited computer vulnerabilities exposed by hackers before they can be fixed and targeted entities in the transportation, health care

and public health sectors. The attackers leveraged the initial hack for additional operations, such as data exfiltration, ransomware and extortion, according to the advisory. The group has used the same Microsoft Exchange vulnerability in Australia, officials say.

The warning is notable because even though ransomware attacks remain prevalent in the U.S., most of the significant ones in the past year have been attributed to Russia-based

criminal hacker gangs rather than Iranian hackers.

Government officials aren't the only ones noticing the Iranian activity: Tech giant Microsoft announced Tuesday that it had seen six different groups in Iran deploying ransomware since last year.

Microsoft said one of the groups spends significant time and energy trying to build rapport with their intended victims before targeting them with spearphishing campaigns.

**By ERIC TUCKER, ALAN SUD-
ERMAN and FRANK BAJAK**

**Associated Press
WASHINGTON (AP)**

U.S. offers investment to boost global COVID vaccine capacity

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Pressed to address gaping inequality in global COVID-19 vaccines, the Biden administration took steps Wednesday to make billions of dollars available to drugmakers to scale up domestic production to share with the world and prepare for the next pandemic.

Under the new initiative, the government's Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority is soliciting pharmaceutical companies with proven ability to make the more-effective mRNA vaccines to bid for U.S. investment in scaling up their manufacturing. Pfizer and Moderna produce the two U.S.-approved mRNA shots.

The White House hopes the move will build capacity to produce an additional 1 billion shots per year.

The initiative comes as the Biden White House has faced growing pressure at home and abroad over inequity in the global vaccine supply — as the U.S. moves toward approving booster shots for all adults while vulnerable people in poorer nations wait for their first dose of protection.

According to an analysis by the ONE Campaign, an international aid and advocacy organization, only 4.7% of people living in low-income countries have received a first dose. Wealthy nations administered more



A dose of a Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is prepared at Lurie Children's hospital, Nov. 5, 2021, in Chicago.

Associated Press

than 173 million booster shots, while lower-income countries have administered about 32 million first shots.

The Biden administration believes increasing capacity of COVID-19 shots will help ease a global shortage of doses, particularly in lower- and middle-income nations, stopping preventable death and limiting the development of potentially new, more dangerous variants of the virus.

"The goal of this program is to expand existing capacity by an additional billion doses per year, with production starting by the second half of 2022," White

House COVID-19 coordinator Jeff Zients said.

On Wednesday, Zients announced that the U.S. has now donated 250 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines globally — the most of any nation — with a goal of sharing more than 1.1 billion shots by the end of 2022.

There are no firm agreements yet with Moderna or Pfizer to take up the U.S. on the investment, but the Biden administration hopes that the enhanced manufacturing capacity, through support for the company's facilities, equipment, staff or training, will by mid-2022 allow more COVID-19 doses

to be shared overseas as well as help prepare for the next public health emergency.

The administration is prioritizing the mRNA vaccines, which have proven to be more effective against preventing serious illness and death from COVID-19 than the Johnson & Johnson viral vector vaccine, which uses a harmless virus that carries genetic material to stimulate the immune system. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are made with a piece of genetic code called messenger RNA that tells the body to make harmless copies of the spike protein so it's trained to recognize the virus.

Robbie Silverman, senior

advocacy manager at Oxfam America, welcomed Biden's plan to invest into vaccine manufacturing capacity but said it was nowhere near sufficient.

"What the world really needs is distributed regional manufacturing capacity of vaccines, and it sounds like this investment is focused on building U.S. capacity," he said. "We desperately need the companies who have a monopoly over the COVID vaccines to transfer their technology, and we need the U.S. government to use its leverage."

Silverman estimated that without companies transferring their knowledge of how to make COVID-19 vaccines, it would take manufacturers elsewhere double the time needed to start making doses, noting that billions of vaccines against other diseases are routinely made in developing countries.

Silverman said that while the U.S. should have negotiated more provisions about vaccine equity when it was securing its own supply, it was not too late to act. He said the U.S. should support the proposed waiver that was drafted by India and South Africa at the World Trade Organization, calling for patents on COVID-19 vaccines and treatments to be suspended. □

Thanksgiving air travel to rebound to 2019 levels, TSA says

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of airline passengers traveling for Thanksgiving this year is expected to rebound to pre-coronavirus pandemic levels, but the Transportation Security Administration says it is ready to handle the surge. Administrator David Pekoske said Wednesday he expects agency staffing to be sufficient for what's traditionally TSA's busiest travel period.

"We are prepared," Pekoske told ABC's "Good Morning America." He said travelers should expect long lines at airports and plan to spend a little more

time getting through security. In 2019, a record 26 million passengers and crew passed through U.S. airport screening in the 11-day period around Thanksgiving. But that plummeted in 2020 as the pandemic kept people at home.

Pekoske said he didn't think a vaccine mandate going into effect for TSA agents Monday would have any effect on staffing for Thanksgiving next week.

"In fact, implementation of the mandate will make travel safer and healthier for everyone," he said. "So, we see quite a significant

increase in the number of our officers that are vaccinated, and I'm very confident that there will be no impact for Thanksgiving." Pekoske told NBC's "Today" on Wednesday he remains "very concerned" about the issue of unruly passengers as incidents on airplanes have continued.

"The level of unruly behavior is much higher than I've ever seen it," he said.

The Federal Aviation Administration says it has referred 37 cases involving unruly airline passengers to the FBI for possible criminal prosecution since the number of disruptions on



Two airplane pilots pass by a line of passengers while waiting at a security check-in line at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago, ahead of Fourth of July weekend, July 1, 2021.

Associated Press

flights began to spike in January. □

U.S.-Canada border towns assess damage from devastating floods

By **LISA BAUMANN and ELAINE THOMPSON**

Associated Press

SUMAS, Wash. (AP) — Residents of this small U.S. city along the Canadian border were assessing damage from flooding that hit an estimated three quarters of homes, as Washington state and British Columbia tried to dry out from an intense, days-long rain storm that cut off key roadways and forced hundreds of evacuations.

Skies were sunny Wednesday morning in the area around Sumas, Washington, where about 500 rescues and evacuations were reported.

"We're looking at going door-to-door, as waters go down in different parts of town," Sumas Mayor Kevin Christensen told The Seattle Times. "Half is on dry ground, half has water."

The soaking by a so-called atmospheric river that dumped torrents rain on the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia from Saturday through Monday reminded people of western Washington's record, severe flooding in November 1990 when two people died and there were more than 2,000 evacuations.



A woman and children who were stranded by high water due to flooding are rescued by a volunteer operating a boat Abbotsford, British Columbia on Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021.

Associated Press

While the weather was improving, the situation remained dire in British Columbia, where the Canadian government was sending in the military to help out with floods and mudslides that destroyed parts of several major highways. Immediately across the border from Sumas, residents of a low-lying area of Abbotsford, British Columbia, have been warned

they face a significant risk to life and must evacuate to avoid rising water levels. Mayor Henry Braun said Wednesday that conditions were bad overnight because a key pumping station was in danger of being overwhelmed. He said crews spent Tuesday night sandbagging around the station and things were "holding steady."

"I'm feeling much better to-

day than last night," Braun said, although he cautioned the danger had not passed.

Fast-rising water levels on the Sumas River in Washington state on Tuesday overwhelmed rescuers in Abbotsford, where 1,100 homes were evacuated. Those residents joined thousands of others in the province who were forced from their homes by floods or

landslides starting Sunday night. Braun said Tuesday that impassable highways were creating havoc as authorities tried to get people to evacuation sites.

On Facebook, the City of Sumas said Wednesday that water levels were continuing to drop and it looked like the community wouldn't be affected by the situation in Abbotsford. It said crews were working hard to clear roads and return power to parts of town still without.

"These families and businesses need our prayers and support as we start the process of cleanup and rebuilding over the next few days," the city said in another Facebook post.

Across the border, the body of a woman was recovered from a landslide near the small community of Lillooet, British Columbia. Royal Canadian Mounted Police said at least two other people were reported missing. Southwest of Sumas, Washington, a 59-year-old man from Everson identified by police Tuesday as Jose Garcia remained missing after his truck was swept into a flooded field and he had been clinging to a tree. □

Pilot death is 2nd amid late season wildfires in Rockies



The Kruger Rock fire continues to burn in Estes Park, Colo., on Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021.

Associated Press

ESTES PARK, Colo. (AP) — Authorities on Wednesday were investigating the death of a pilot who crashed while fighting a wildfire near Rocky Mountain National Park, the sec-

ond person to die amid wind-driven, late season wildfires in the Rockies this week.

The pilot of the single-engine air tanker was found dead Tuesday night south

of Estes Park about three hours after authorities received reports of a crash, the Larimer County Sheriff's Office said. The pilot was the only person on board, it said.

KUSA-TV reported that it spoke to the pilot who died before he took off, saying that he was excited for the night time flight, which he said was the culmination of about five years of hard work.

The National Transportation Safety Board was sending an investigator to the crash, agency spokesperson Peter Knudson said Wednesday. What kind of equipment the Air Tractor AT-802A had to fight fires at night would be something investigators would look at, he said.

Earlier this week, another

wind-driven wildfire led to the death a person near Wyoming's border with Montana.

Firefighters fully contained that fire that burned about half a square mile in the area of Clark, an unincorporated community of about 300 people just south of the Montana line. The fire happened when a branch blew into a power line and caught fire, Park County Fire Warden Jerry Parker said.

In south-central Montana, a fire reported late Monday night led the Stillwater County Sheriff's Office to order evacuations southwest of the town of Absarokee. The Colorado fire was also started by high winds. Investigators found wind blew a tree onto a nearby powerline causing it to arc

and start the fire, the Larimer County Sheriff's Office said. The fire started amid warmer-than-normal temperatures and drought conditions in much of Colorado though the weather was cooler Wednesday after some light snow fell in parts of the mountains. No measurable snow fell in Denver, which is on track to set a record for its latest snowfall, according to the National Weather Service. The fire did not grow much overnight and was estimated to have burned about 140 acres (57 hectares) as of Wednesday, with the fire considered contained around 15% of its perimeter, the U.S. Forest Service said. Firefighters hoped to take advantage of cooler temperatures and lighter winds to stop its growth, it said. □

Japan, U.S. set framework for talks on trade, broader ties

By MARI YAMAGUCHI

Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — U.S. Trade Representative Katharine Tai and Japan's trade and industry minister agreed Wednesday to work to resolve a dispute over American tariffs on steel and aluminum as part of a framework for cooperation in wider areas.

A partnership announced earlier this week also will include working on a "Japan-U.S. common global agenda" for trade and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said.

Tai and METI Minister Koichi Hagiuda's talks Wednesday followed a visit to Tokyo earlier in the week by Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo. Tai and Hagiuda also agreed to set up a bilateral framework of talks among senior officials from the USTR and Japanese trade and foreign ministries to discuss trade issues and check "unfair practices related to third countries."

The statement did not name those countries but



U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai, right, poses for a photo with her counterpart Koichi Hagiuda prior to their meeting in Tokyo, Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021.

Associated Press

appeared to be alluding to China.

"For Japan and the United States, who share values of freedom, democracy and rule of law, leading the world economy, it's essential that we strengthen our economic cooperative relationship," Hagiuda said. The U.S. envoys have been

visiting the region in a first obvious push by President Joe Biden's administration to soothe frictions left over from Donald Trump's days in office.

"In affirming the U.S. commitment to the Indo-Pacific, President Biden has stressed that his vision seeks a region that is open, con-

nected, prosperous, resilient and secure," Tai said.

The effort to settle the tariffs issue comes as prices for steel have surged as economies shift into high gear after slowing during the pandemic.

At the same time, major economies have doubled down on trying to curb ex-

cess output in both industries.

METI said in a statement that the two sides had confirmed plans for negotiations on the tariffs issue and on addressing global excess production capacity. It said Tai and Hagiuda also discussed preparations for ministerial level talks of the World Trade Organization that are due to begin Nov. 30 in Geneva.

Tai was to also meet with Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi for talks and working dinner later Wednesday.

Trump imposed extra tariffs of 25% on imports of steel and 10% on imports of aluminum, citing a need to protect American industries. That move angered U.S. allies in Japan, South Korea and Europe.

In meetings with Tai and Raimondo, Japanese officials said they were emphatic about having the tariffs problem resolved.

The U.S. and EU recently resolved their dispute over the punitive tariffs, with the U.S. agreeing to increase imports from the bloc. □

U.N. atomic watchdog: Iran further raising nuclear stockpile

By KIYOKO METZLER

VIENNA (AP)

— The United Nations' atomic watchdog says it believes Iran has further increased its stockpile of highly enriched uranium in breach of a 2015 accord with world powers.

The International Atomic Energy Agency told member nations in its confidential quarterly report Wednesday that Iran has an estimated stock of 17.7 kilograms (39 pounds) of uranium enriched to up to 60% fissile purity, an increase of almost 8 kilograms since August.

Such highly enriched uranium can be easily refined to make atomic weapons, which is why world powers have sought to contain Tehran's nuclear program.

The Vienna-based agency told members that it is still not able to verify Iran's exact stockpile of enriched uranium due to the limitations Tehran imposed on

U.N. inspectors earlier this year.

The IAEA has been unable to access surveillance footage of Iranian nuclear sites or of online enrichment monitors and electronic seals since February. The agency's chief, Rafael Mariano Grossi, told The Associated Press this month that the situation was like "flying in a heavily clouded sky."

In a separate report to member states Wednesday about its work in Iran, the agency said Grossi was concerned about inspectors "being subjected to excessively invasive physical searches by security officials at nuclear facilities in Iran."

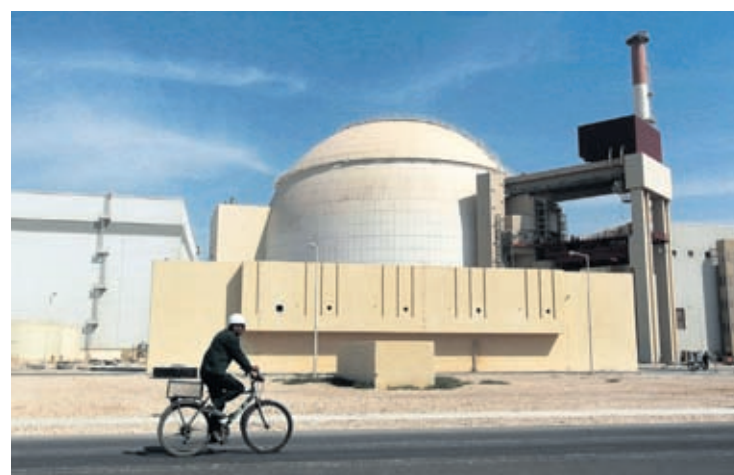
"He reiterates the call upon Iran to take immediate steps to remedy the situation, and to implement security procedures at nuclear facilities that are consistent with internationally ac-

cepted security practices and Iran's legal obligations in relation to privileges and immunities of the agency and its inspectors," the IAEA said, according to the confidential quarterly report seen by The Associated Press.

The agency said it "categorically rejects" the idea its cameras at Iranian nuclear sites played a role in a sabotage attack on the Karaj facility near Tehran in June. Iran accuses Israel of being behind the incident.

A senior diplomat who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity said the searches of the inspectors carried out in Iran were very time-consuming and made some feel intimidated. The diplomat was not authorized to be named while speaking to the media about the visits.

Grossi is expected to travel to Tehran this month for



A worker rides a bicycle in front of the reactor building of the Bushehr nuclear power plant, just outside the southern city of Bushehr, Iran, Oct. 26, 2010.

Associated Press

direct talks with Iranian officials on restoring the agency's ability to know in real-time what the country is doing.

Senior diplomats from Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia plan to meet with Iranian officials in Vienna on Nov. 29 to discuss bringing Tehran back into compliance with the 2015

Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The pact eased sanctions on Iran in return for curbs on its nuclear program.

The United States pulled out of the accord under former President Donald Trump and reimposed sanctions on Iran, prompting Tehran to resume uranium enrichment. □

Hundreds go missing in Burkina Faso amid extremist violence

FADA N'GOURMA, Burkina Faso (AP) — The last time

Polenti Combari spoke to her son on the phone she prayed for God to bless him. Shortly after, she called back but the line was dead.

Her 34-year-old son was returning a truck used to move the family's belongings from their village in eastern Burkina Faso after jihadis forced everyone to leave. He disappeared in March.

"We will keep searching ... I'm just praying to God to have him back," said Combari, 53, sitting despondently in the eastern city of Fada N'Gourma where she now lives.

Islamic extremist violence is ravaging Burkina Faso, killing thousands and displacing more than 1 million people.

And people are going missing. Reports of missing relatives quadrupled from 104 to 407 between 2019 and 2020, according to the International Committee of the Red Cross, which defines a missing person as someone whose whereabouts cannot be accounted for and requires state intervention.

"With the conflict, you have more sudden movements of people, you have more incidents which can lead to separation and disappearance," said Marina Fakhouri,



Polenti Combari poses for a photograph in Fada N'Gourma, Burkina Faso, Oct. 5, 2021. Her 34-year-old son disappeared in March 2021.

Associated Press

ri, head of protection with the ICRC in Burkina Faso. "Certainly we are concerned also by the number of families who are coming to us directly to signal that they have a missing relative and need support."

People have previously gone missing in the West African nation due to migration, floods or shocks from climate change, but the magnitude has increased because of the violence, she said.

Tracing people during a conflict and in a context of mass displacement is

challenging, can cause tensions within families and communities and psychological and physical distress. One month after her son disappeared, Combari's husband died of a heart attack due to the shock, she said.

While some families blame the jihadis for the disappearances of their loved ones, many others point to the security forces as the main perpetrators. During a trip to Fada N'Gourma in October and speaking to people in the Sahel province by phone, three fami-

lies, including Combari's, told The Associated Press they suspect the army is responsible for their missing relatives.

The military has been accused by rights groups of extrajudicial killings and targeting people deemed to be associated with the jihadis. About 70% of families reporting people missing allege it is linked to the security forces, said Daouda Diallo, executive secretary for the Collective Against Impunity and Stigmatization of Communities, a civil society group.

There's been a reduction of reported cases affiliated with the military since the end of last year, which Diallo attributes to a report by Human Rights Watch that accused the army of being involved in mass killings, said Diallo. But now the abuses are being committed by volunteer fighters, civilians armed by the state, he said.

"It is sad to see that the violence has been subcontracted to armed civilians or militia in the field," Diallo said.

The ministry of defense did not respond to requests for comment.

Burkina Faso's increasing violence fuels impunity among the security forces and the abductions and killings highlight the absence of the rule of law, conflict analysts say.

"A significant proportion of the violence is attributed either to jihadist groups or 'unidentified armed men' making it easy to absolve certain parties of responsibility. It's easy to kill people or make them disappear, but much more difficult to protect them," said Henri Nsaibia, senior researcher at the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project.

Families searching for relatives they believe were taken by state agents say they don't know where to turn. □

UK court sends 9 road-blocking climate protesters to prison



An Insulate Britain protestor stands upon a police van during a demonstration in front of Parliament in Westminster in London, Nov. 4, 2021.

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — A British court on Wednesday sen-

tenced nine members of the climate action group

Insulate Britain to up to six months in prison for breaching an injunction designed to prevent road blockades. Sentencing the protesters, judge Victoria Sharp said that there was no alternative to the prison sentences because of the seriousness of the group's actions and their clear intention to further flout court orders.

Insulate Britain has made headlines after staging multiple demonstrations that have obstructed many of Britain's main highways and roads in recent weeks. The group demands that the government better insulate homes in the country to cut carbon emissions.

The nine admitted breaching an injunction by taking part in a blockade at a busy motorway during the morning rush hour on Oct. 8. Some of the group glued themselves to each other and two glued themselves to the road.

Ben Taylor, 37, was given a six-month sentence, the longest of the group. The judge said Taylor's statement to the court, in which he vowed to continue protesting, was "inflammatory" and a "call to arms."

Two protesters from the group were sentenced to three months, while another six were sentenced to four months in prison.

"Anyone who causes misery to motorists may face prison," Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said in a tweet Wednesday. "I'll continue to do all I can to protect road-users and prevent dangerous, disruptive behavior."

Insulate Britain said it will not stop protesting, and called on the public to join their cause. Emma Smart, one of the nine, said she planned to go on a hunger strike.

In a statement read out by supporters outside the court, the jailed protesters said they were merely demanding the government protect people and the economy. □

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Schools close as smog-laden India capital considers lockdown

By SHEIKH SAALIQ and SHONAL GANGULY

Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Authorities closed schools indefinitely and shut down some coal-burning power plants Wednesday to reduce air pollution in India's smog-shrouded capital and neighboring states, as the country weighs an unprecedented and more far-reaching step: a lockdown in New Delhi.

The dirty-air crisis in the city of more than 20 million people has underscored India's heavy dependence on coal, which accounts for 70% of the country's power. The New Delhi state government said it is open to the idea of a weekend lockdown to reduce automobile traffic and potentially other air-polluting activity in the city, and it is awaiting the go-ahead from India's Supreme Court. A decision could come as early as Nov. 24.

It's not clear how extensive the lockdown would be. Authorities are discussing whether to allow industries to continue operating.

Some experts said a lockdown would achieve very little in controlling pollution and would instead cause disruptions in the economy and harm the livelihoods of millions of people.

"This is not the solution that we are looking for, because this is hugely disruptive. And we also have to keep in mind that the economy is already under pressure, poor people are at risk," said Anumita Roychowdhury, executive director at the Center for Science and Environment, a research and advocacy organization in New Delhi. Soaring pollution levels in the capital prompted a federal environment ministry panel to issue strict



Commuters drive amidst morning haze and toxic smog in New Delhi, India, Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021.

Associated Press

guidelines Tuesday night to stem the pollution and show residents that the government is taking action against a crisis that has plagued the city for years. Besides closing schools and shutting down some power plants, the Commission for Air Quality Management ordered a stop to construction until Nov. 21 and banned trucks carrying non-essential goods. The panel also directed the affected states to encourage work from home for half of the employees in all private offices.

The importance of coal to India was underlined just days ago at the world climate talks in Scotland, where almost 200 nations accepted a compromise deal to fight global warming. It contained a last-minute change sought by India that watered down crucial language about coal.

The agreement as amended would "phase down" rather than "phase out" coal power, the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions.

Levels of dangerous particles in New Delhi's air Wednesday were as high as seven times the safe level, climbing above 300 micrograms per cubic meter in some parts of the city. The World Health Organization designates the safe level as 25.

Forecasters warned air quality will worsen before the arrival of cold winds next week that will blow

away the smog.

Earlier this month, air pollution reached the "severe" level in the capital, and residents faced bouts of heavy, multiday pollution. That prompted the Supreme Court last week to order state and federal governments to take "imminent and emergency" action. New Delhi authorities responded by proposing a lockdown and closing schools for a week.

Among the many Indian cities gasping for breath, New Delhi tops the list every year.

Auto emissions contribute

nearly 25% of the city's pollution in the winter, according to the federal government. The crisis deepens in the cold-weather months when the burning of crop residue in neighboring states coincides with lower temperatures that trap smoke. That smoke travels to New Delhi.

Emissions from industries with no pollution-control technology, smoke from firecrackers linked to festivals, and construction dust also sharply increase in winter months.

Several studies have estimated that more than a million Indians die each year because of air pollution-related diseases.

The capital has often experimented with limiting the number of cars on the road, using large anti-smog guns and halting construction. But the steps have had little effect.

Residents say the government isn't doing enough.

Suresh Chand Jain, a New Delhi shop owner, said authorities should introduce stricter regulations to limit car use and control the burning of crop residue.

"Shutting down the city will not end the pollution," Jain said. Experts say such emergency measures are not helpful in the long run.

"These are done only to ensure that you don't worsen the situation, that you shave off the peak. But it is not a silver bullet that is going to just clean the air immediately," Roychowdhury said. □



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Papillon Restaurant presents: Chef's Garden, culinary magic by European top chef in a romantic garden

PALM BEACH—A true once-in-a-lifetime experience is coming up. The stage: an Aruban cunucu house creating a magical ambience. The play: The Chef's Garden; a 6-course culinary voyage and French-Asian gastronomic ecstasy by Dutch top chef Martijn

Liebrechts on Wednesdays. You will leave this culinary Garden of Eden in an enchanted state creating a memory that will last a lifetime. Be sure to reserve this opportunity before others do. This production is presented to you by Papillon Restaurant.

Sometimes combining the best of the best is a matter of all things falling into place. Every Wednesday from 7pm you are welcomed to enter a world where food is a passion. Papillon Restaurant presents their guest chef Liebrechts—who will be on the island for a limited time period - and with The Chef's Garden menu being a fresh concept on the island, we're sure you will fall completely in love with this.

A bit about Martijn

Liebrechts is the perfect example of when career and passion come together. He earned his spurs at Amber, one of the best French fine dining restaurants Hong Kong has to offer, with 2 Michelin-stars and ranked as the 24th best restaurant in the world. Amber has been the place where he got inspired by the use of Asian ingredients prepared in a classical French way which is still the base of his nowa-



days cooking style. Moving back to Amsterdam, The Netherlands, he joined the team of former Bib Gourmand restaurant "Wilde Zwijnen", which was awarded the title "The New Dutch Cuisine" by the New York Times. He has been there and done it all around the world.

The menu is carefully done with local products, fresh and perfectly matched with a selection of wines by local sommeliers. Diet options are available; please inform them when you make your reservation.

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This is an in-home dining experience where you will feel you are part of an exclusive setting. Private culinary events are the owner's specialty and their lush, tropical garden is also inviting for you to relax and indulge in hours of authentic culinary delights, a heaven to foodies. For more than a decade, Papillon restaurant has built a reputation with the fusion of classic French cuisine, Dutch and Caribbean flavors. They know how to thrill and in collaboration with The Secret Garden we can only expect phenomenal.

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Stars of the day:

Carolyne, Cristalyne & Caithlyne Kock Believe in yourself and follow your dreams!

sponsored by:



Caithlyne, Cristalyne y Carolyne are children of Aruba's well-known Beauty Pageant Queen Chastity Kock-Hodge. Chastity is the Director of 'The Chaz Modelling & Talent School, located in the city of Savaneta. The school was funded 23 years ago. Currently the school consists of 55 children and youngster between the ages of 4 to 20. The school gives these chil-

dren the opportunity to develop their skills in modelling and dancing, but also helps them with face and body expression and public speaking. The school also gives coaching to beauty pageants.

Sunday November 21 'The Chaz Modelling & Talent School' will be hosting a talent show

called 'Back on Stage' which will be held at the Renaissance Convention Center starting at 5.30PM. Everyone is invited to support our children our local talents.

For more information visit their facebook page The Chaz Modelling & Talent School.□



Carolyne Alessandra Sophia Kock is 6 years old and is a first grader at Colegio Sagrado Curazon. Carolyne's hobbies are singing, dancing, modelling, playing with her dogs and painting. Although her young age, Carolyne has already accomplish a variety of things. Currently she is singing with Pitbull Singing Production and has recorded the promotional song for the National Library Children Bookweek Song: YOUR PASSION.

What do you want to be when you grow up?
I want to become a bakery chef, a singer and an artist

What do you like about yourself?
I love to dress up pretty for my shows.

What do you do when you feel sad?
I don't feel sad a lot but when I do I go play with my dogs.

Who is your best friend and why?
I have a lot of friends. At school my best friend is Skylee and Anderson who is my favorite cousin. We always play and have fun.

What is your message to all the children of Aruba?
To always listen to your mommy and daddy, do your homework and pray to God to bless all children of the world.



Cristalyne Seachelle Marie Kock is 8 years old is also a pupil at Colegio Sagrado Curazon in third grade. Cristalyne is a very active girl. She likes to dance, model, play with her dogs, ballet, gymnastics and the beach. Cristalyne is a well-known face on the island. She has participated and won different beauty pageants like 'Reinita' Check Point Color, Princess Beauty Aruba 2019, Mini Popular, Best Talent, Best Model, Photogenic, Miss Amistad, Mini Social Media. Cristalyne is a complete little Miss.

What do you want to be when you grow up?
I want to be a TV or movie star and maybe a model too.

What do you like about yourself?
I am very positive and energetic and I believe in a world full of color and glitter.

What do you do when you feel sad?
I am very happy but when I feel sad I sit quiet for a while. But not for long, I will forget and go back to playing.

Who is your best friend and why?
My best friend at school is Dyvienne and Yeiski because we are friends since kindergarten. But I have a lot of friends because I'm very social and love to make friends

What is your message to all the children from Aruba?
Always believe in your dreams, if you believe you will achieve them.



Caithlyne Monique Gabriela Kock is the older sister of Cristalyne and Carolyne. She is 12 years old and is currently attending the Nigel Mathew College (HAVO). Her hobbies are modelling, artistic swimming and chatting with her friends.

Caithlyne has a variety of achievements as well; 'Reinita' Check Point Color, Mini Miss Frozen, Baby Miss Aruba, Little Princess Aruba, Best Gala Dress, Best Talent, Baby Model International at the Dominican Republic, Best Talent International and a Gold Medal from the International UANA Competition with the Barracuda's Artistic Swimming team.

What do you want to be when you grow up?
I'm not sure yet but probably something in the accounting area. My biggest dream is to become a professional model that walks international runways for great brand names.

What do you like about yourself?
When I set a goal for myself I go for it with all my being. Most of the times I do reach them too.

What do you do when you feel sad?
Mostly I try to reflect on the problem so I can find a solution to solve it.

Who is your best friend and why?
My best friends at school are Jeanedy and Lufy, because we've been together since childhood.

What is your message to all the children of Aruba?
Make sure to practice self-care and study hard which is the key to your future. Believe in yourself and all your qualities.

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Arrival Sinterklaas and his helpers in Aruba

ORANJESTAD – Last Sunday, the Minister of Culture, Xiomara Maduro welcomed Sinterklaas and his helpers in Aruba.

Due to COVID-19, the organizers did not hold a public activity to welcome Sinterklaas. Children could follow the arrival of Sinterklaas and its helpers via a television program. The Sinterklaas Foundation organized a program that included storytelling, dance, singing, cupcake making, magic, drawing, and prizes.

In her speech, the Minister asked Sinterklaas to take COVID-19 away in his bag because COVID is naughty. It prevented our country from leading a normal, healthy, and quiet life. The Minister thanked



Sinterklaas and his helpers, the foundation, and those who contributed to the beautiful welcome program for Sinterklaas.

History of Sinterklaas

Based on St. Nicolas, the patron saint of children, Sinterklaas (the

name is a contraction of Sint Nikolaas) is a legendary Christmas figure celebrated in the Netherlands. Although similar to Santa Claus in that he is an older man with a full, white beard who wears red, Sinterklaas is a more serious figure, donning a bishop's headdress and carrying a long, curled shepherd's staff.

The Dutch celebrate the Feast of Sinterklaas honoring the life of St. Nicholas, and although St. Nicholas is always shown wearing his bishop's attire, the Dutch tend to see him as a kindly old man, rather than as a Catholic saint. The result is that Sinterklaas is celebrated by Dutch people of all ages and beliefs, without any real religious connotations. □

Post Aruba emitted a new stamp series "Agriculture"

ORANJESTAD — On November 16, 2021 Post Aruba N.V. emitted a new stamp series. This stamp series is named "Agriculture" and was designed by Mr. Elvis Tromp

About the designer:

Elvis Tromp is a self taught Aruban-born painter and graphic designer. Working mostly in oils, Elvis painted the charming Aruban landscapes that fascinate so many art-lovers for over 5 decades. Mr. Tromp has been painting Aruban landscapes since he was a child and enjoys making each scene a personal interpretation. He also finds time to paint portraits of friends and family.

Because Elvis is a self-taught artist, he had the opportunity to discover his environment, his style and technique in his own way. Although this was very hard and slow in the beginning, it was very positive and helped him working his way through life to become a respected and exhibited artist. During the last decade, Elvis has been experimenting with abstract and figurative paintings.

Elvis has illustrated several books and has also designed post stamps.

Description of the Agriculture stamp series:

Agriculture is the art and science of cultivating the soil, growing crops and raising livestock. It includes the preparation of plant and animal products for people to use and their distribution to the markets. The methods used, may vary from one part of the world to another.



Over the centuries, the growth of agriculture contributed to the rise of civilizations. Adapting wild plants for people to use is called domestication.

Aruba is very dry and small (20 mile long) with an average rainfall of less than 20 inches per year. Because of that, we are forced to concentrate on growing several crops in small amounts in the same small area. This type of gardening attempts to grow plants closer to maximize space and minimize the need for weeding. Vertical farming is also an option. We can think of using cheap material as pallet-wood to build our own boxes and to use the minimal space and still be able to grow our vegetables and fruits. Everyone can afford to have a small area in their garden and with a small investment, to cultivate their own vegetables and fruits.

Santa Rosa (department of Agriculture, livestock and fisheries) gives support to local farmers. In Aruba we cultivate a wide variety of plants such as tomatoes, bell peppers, corn (maishi rabo), beans, watermelons, papaya, melons, peanuts, and cucumber. Those are grown mostly for personal consumption. During the pandemic Covid 19 we realized

how important it is to grow our own products. Besides helping Aruba diversify its' economy, this will one day in the future lead to the fact that the importation of vegetables and fruit will no longer be needed and we will depend solely on ourselves and on our own farmers for fresh vegetables and fruits.

The designs show the procedure from planting to watering, to fruit bearing and harvesting, using self-made wooden boxes out of pallets (also vertical gardening), all concentrating in a limited space.

This stamps series consists of four stamps of the values 90c, 220c, 320c, 420c which makes it total of Awg.10.50 for the series. And it is also accompanied by a First Day Cover envelope at the price of Awg.13.50. These are available at all the Post Aruba locations, namely in Oranjestad and San Nicolas.

Make sure that you have this stamp series in your collection as the stock is limited.

For more information on the "Agriculture" issue please visit the Facebook page: Aruba Stamps or Webpage: postaruba.com/philatelic/ □



Amid crypto's Wild West, Binance says a sheriff is needed

By STAN CHOE A

NEW YORK (AP) — The cryptocurrency market gets likened to the Wild West by critics, and now a key player is asking for sheriffs to come to town.

Binance, the world's largest exchange for trading Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies, says it's time for global regulators to establish rules for crypto markets. It released a list of "10 fundamental rights for crypto users" this week that it wants to guide discussions with regulators, policymakers and other exchanges. The company acknowledges that crypto platforms have an obligation to protect users and to implement processes to prevent financial crimes, along with the responsibility to work with regulators and policymakers to set standards to keep users safe.

The call for regulation might seem strange for an industry whose popularity exploded in some part precisely because it sought to operate outside the heavy hand of governments and other authorities. But Binance CEO Changpeng Zhao, who goes by "CZ," says more regulation for the industry is inevitable, and this allows his company to play a role in the discussions. It may also help draw in people who are still hesitant to get into crypto.

"This year, most of the regulators around the world are looking at crypto intently, and many of them are communicating with us," Zhao said. "So we feel this is the right time" to issue a call for a global framework.

"We feel that it is important for industry players to have a seat at the table," he said. "And we also feel that some regulations, if they're made in a vacuum, may not have practical considerations in how they are applied, and they don't get applied very well."

Regulatory scrutiny of cryptocurrencies has intensified as they've grown more mainstream. Big businesses, professional investors and even the government of El Salvador are all buying in, even if critics struggle



Binance CEO Changpeng Zhao answers a question during a Zoom meeting interview with The Associated Press on Tuesday, Nov. 16, 2021.

Associated Press

to see the value of digital currencies created by non-governments. They're broadening crypto's base beyond its initial core of fanatics and sent Bitcoin last week to a record high of nearly \$68,991, more than doubling in 2021.

Binance's call for regulation reminds some on Wall Street of the playbook that companies have followed in other disruptive industries after becoming big winners.

"They're doing what Uber and Lyft did," said Gil Luria, technology strategist at D.A. Davidson. "Build a business ahead of regulations. When it gets to a certain scale, acknowledge that regulation will be helpful and then help shape it."

Zhao said that Binance welcomes regulations "for many reasons. One of those minor reasons is a selfish reason: that in a regulated industry, the few larger players will remain. The smaller players do get cut off, which is unfortunate for those guys."

The move could also prove to be wise if Binance's U.S. business ultimately tries to sell stock on a U.S. ex-

change, something Zhao hopes will happen in the next few years. A competitor, Coinbase, has already fetched a nearly \$74 billion market value on Wall Street following its initial public offering this spring.

Such opportunities for wealth have drawn more new investors into crypto, as well as the eyes of regulators.

"Right now, we just don't have enough investor protection in crypto," Gary Gensler, chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission, said in a speech this summer while calling it the "Wild West."

"This asset class is rife with fraud, scams, and abuse in certain applications," he said. "There's a great deal of hype and spin about how crypto assets work. In many cases, investors aren't able to get rigorous, balanced, and complete information."

Analysts said they expect Binance to agree to report transactions to U.S. regulators looking for movements involved in the financing of terrorism, among other things. One of Binance's "fundamental rights" also

calls for strict regulations on marketplaces that offer "derivatives and leveraged instruments," which can be lucrative but also very risky trades for investors.

Most regulators around the world are focusing on "know your customer" rules, where financial companies try to verify the identity of who's using their services, Zhao said. They're also keyed in on protections for consumers.

But even there, "different countries do have different interpretations and different meanings for these very simple words," Zhao said. In the U.S., for example, the emphasis for anti-money laundering is on blocking financing for terrorism, while Chinese regulators are looking more for people moving money out of the country.

Campbell Harvey, a finance professor at Duke University who recently wrote a book titled "DeFi and the Future of Finance," said regulators are playing catch-up with complicated and fast-moving technologies, while trying to find a balance between protecting investors and

not squashing innovation or driving it to other countries. The stakes are rising to get it right. The uncertainty now around what regulation will eventually look like is keeping some big institutional investors like pension funds out of crypto. And that's where the opportunity for even bigger money for the industry lies.

Given all the complexities, Harvey said the best solution may be for the U.S. government to create a new agency to oversee cryptocurrencies and the ecosystem around them, rather than relying on a combination of regulatory bodies.

"It's complex, and it just doesn't fit many of the usual regulatory models," he said.

Zhao, who said the only cryptocurrencies he owns are Bitcoin and Binance coin, said some parts of the cryptocurrency world look more like securities, while others look more like commodities or currencies. And the ecosystem is growing by the day as people can create new tokens with just a few clicks of a mouse and keyboard.

He likened it to the early days of the internet, when people were trying to figure out what kind of media it was. Is it radio? TV? Something else?

"People may have a tendency to view crypto as a single asset, which I think is a little bit misleading," he said. "Crypto is a fundamental technology that can improve on many of the traditional asset types." □

ARUBA CLEAN



IS MORE DUSHI

CROSSWORD

By **THOMAS JOSEPH**

ACROSS 43 Unspoiled

1 Sunset spot

5 Barn section

10 Choir voice

11 Twain of music

12 Fresh reaction

13 State part

14 Frisks

16 Shop with cages

20 Laundry problems

23 "The Matrix" hero

24 Beef cuts

25 Puerto —

27 Road-house

28 Frisco team

29 Refueling breaks

32 Cheap criticisms

36 Distressed cry

39 State frankly

40 Banishes

41 Falafel holder

42 Diving ducks

DOWN

1 Hornet's kin

2 Singer

3 RBI or

4 Tennis

5 Exhibits

6 Jeer at

7 Writer

8 Ignited

9 Put down

11 Fife fellows

15 Animal abodes

17 As soon as

18 Caboose setting

19 Millennia

20 Goof

21 Writer

22 "—"

25 Shreds

26 Fit

28 Jottings

30 Join a bee

31 Big books

33 "The Art of Love" poet

34 Carry

35 Graceful swimmer

36 Filming site

37 Tin Man's prop

38 Through

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Yesterday's answer

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11-18

A X Y D L B A A X R
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

11-18

CRYPTOQUOTE

A X B K Y V D X K A Q Z L K O J A .

N B Y Q Y ' Z R X Y L K O J A

D R X B C V Y X N D Y K B D .

— R Q D M Z N X V K

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: BUZZ AND THE RIGHT PUBLICIST ARE NOT ONLY IMPORTANT BUT CRUCIAL IN SHOW BUSINESS. — HALSTON

'No Nukes' footage bypasses Springsteen's aversion to film



Bruce Springsteen performs at the 13th annual Stand Up For Heroes benefit concert in support of the Bob Woodruff Foundation in New York on Nov. 4, 2019.

Associated Press

By **DAVID BAUDER**

NEW YORK (AP) — If there's one thing Bruce Springsteen's fans can find fault with in their hero, it's his early aversion to film cameras. Because of that, there is very little onscreen documentation of Springsteen onstage in the mid- to late-1970s, when the power and majesty of the E Street Band combined with youthful exuberance for some truly epic concert experiences. Without a ticket and a good memory, they passed you by.

That makes this week's release of a 90-minute film that shows them performing at the "No Nukes" benefit concerts in September 1979 significant for fans and music historians. It's found money.

Before a friendly crowd at New York's Madison Square Garden, Springsteen and his gang of Jersey toughs crackle with pent-up energy. They'd been off the road in 1979, recording "The River," and are thrilled to be before an audience again. Their typical four-hour show was condensed into 90 minutes. Sharing a bill with artists like Jackson Browne, Graham Nash, and Bonnie Raitt, they burned to show peers what they could do. Little wonder, then, to see them burst onto the stage with a roaring version of "Prove it All Night." That's exactly what they intended to do.

When filmmaker Thom Zimny first reviewed the footage, it was without sound, and he could still tell some-

thing special was happening.

"You see them explode on-screen," he said. "The sheer force of E Street at this point was amazing to see."

Springsteen explains that superstition led him to keep cameras away in those days, something about a musician not wanting to look too closely at his bag of tricks.

"I don't want to see what I'm doing, because it might change what I'm doing," he said recently, "and what I'm doing is working for me and it's working for the audience."

It's different now; all of Springsteen's shows are filmed. Back in 1979, the "No Nukes" concert escaped the film phobia because a crew was on hand to make a documentary on the benefit for alternatives to nuclear energy. There actually wasn't much incentive for filming shows in the pre-MTV, pre-YouTube days, said Chris Phillips, editor and publisher of Backstreets, the website for Springsteen news. With no real outlet on television or the movies, "you were just playing rock 'n' roll," he said.

As a result, footage of more than snippets of Springsteen onstage then are relatively rare, he said. One show in Phoenix turns up on YouTube, recorded by his record company for a commercial to promote Springsteen in parts of the country where he wasn't well known yet. Portions of a Houston show, taken for an arena's in-house use, survive. So does a recording Springsteen's first show in London, at the Hammer-smith Odeon in 1975.

A couple of Springsteen's performances appeared on the "No Nukes" documentary and album. Mostly, the footage remained locked away in a vault until Zimny was given access. He turned it into the film that is being released now partly as a pandemic project.

"It was something that I did because I missed the band so much," Zimny said.

Unlike much of the surviving footage of Springsteen from those days, Zimny was working with quality film, shot by a crew that could provide multiple angles. Still, there are imperfections: images of Steve Van Zandt's solo on "Jungleland" are missing, perhaps because they were reloading cameras.

Zimny kept to the running list of the shows, held on back-to-back nights (including Springsteen's 30th birthday), and including some different encores — the "Detroit medley" of covers one night, a performance of Buddy Holly's "Rave On" another. The shows included sneak peeks of "Sherry Darling" from "The River" and the upcoming album's title cut, and a duet with Browne on "Stay." □

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Amazon-sponsored artwork that 'learns' debuts at Smithsonian

By **MATTHEW BARAKAT**
WASHINGTON (AP) — The artificial intelligence at the heart of a new art exhibit, "me + you," does not judge you necessarily, but it does analyze and interpret what you have to say. Sponsored by Amazon Web Services, the sculpture by artist Suchi Reddy listens to what you have to say about the future and renders your sentiment in a display of colored lights and patterns. The artwork is a centerpiece of a new exhibit at the Smithsonian Arts and Industries Building, which is opening to the public for the first time in 20 years. The exhibition, called Futures, opens Nov. 20. Viewers are invited to interact with the sculpture, which listens for the words "My future is ..." at several circular listening posts integrated into the sculpture. The words and the senti-

ments behind them are then reinterpreted as a pattern of colored lights. On a very basic level, positive emotions tend to translate into soothing blends of blue, green and purple. Words that suggest anger might prompt a cascade of colors on the opposite spectrum of the color wheel. If you use a swear word, the lights will turn red. No matter the sentiment, Reddy said, "I want to show all human emotion as beautiful." And the interpretations will evolve and become more nuanced over time as the artificial intelligence progresses. Swami Sivasubramanian, vice president of Amazon Machine Learning at Amazon Web Services, said the artwork incorporates sentiment analysis that not only decodes the meaning of words but a speaker's sentiment behind the words. □

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Back from injury, Shiffrin eyes World Cup record in Finland

By **ERIC WILLEMSSEN**
Associated Press

Approaching a race weekend where she can set yet another Alpine skiing World Cup record might sound like business as usual to Mikaela Shiffrin.

This time, it's not.

The American double Olympic champion has arrived in Levi, Finland, after dealing with back pain that limited her preparation in Copper Mountain, the U.S. ski team's training base in Colorado.

Only the last days before heading to Finnish Lapland was Shiffrin able to ski the volume she had planned.

"Coming here, I was a little less concerned about it. We are through the worst of this whole spasm. On to the skiing, hopefully," Shiffrin said Wednesday after arriving in Levi for two slaloms this weekend.

Shiffrin has won 45 of her 70 career World Cups in slalom, leaving her one short of the best mark for most wins in a single discipline, set by Swedish great Ingemar Stenmark with 46 giant slalom wins in the 1970s and '80s.

Shiffrin already holds the women's record, since surpassing Lindsey Vonn's tally of 43 wins, in downhill.



Mikaela Shiffrin checks the slope ahead of an alpine ski, World Cup women's giant slalom in Jasna, Slovakia, Sunday, March 7, 2021.

Saturday's race will be her first since winning the season-opening GS in Sölden, Austria, four weeks ago.

And with the back issue under control, Shiffrin is grateful to be able to focus on skiing again instead of nursing an injury.

Though she sat out the GS in Sölden a year ago after tweaking her back in training, Shiffrin has stayed clear of major physical injuries through her 10-year professional career.

Her worst setback? Hurting

her knee in warmups for a GS in Are, Sweden, which kept her away from the slopes for two months in early 2016.

"Looking back on my career I think it's a really cool thing to have gotten through this far with a fewer amount of injuries than a lot of people may expect," Shiffrin said.

"I know that a lot of people would say that means that I haven't been pushing hard enough and doing enough," she added.

"Because there's a lot of

people up there with the perspective that you are not a complete athlete or a complete ski racer without having to overcome a major physical injury."

For the American, though, that has become "a very different story now" since her world turned upside down following the death of her father, Jeff Shiffrin, in February 2020.

She only returned 10 months later — at the slalom weekend in Levi a year ago.

"It is not a physical injury to

a bone, or muscle, or ligament, but ... the injury of a legitimate broken heart, that has been taking a long time to get over," Shiffrin said.

"And there is no road map, which is even scarier. I guess that is probably the biggest injury I will ever have in my career, no matter what will happen."

Shiffrin finished second and fifth, respectively, upon her comeback in Levi, though getting good results was not her main interest that weekend.

It was more about top-level ski racing as such, and whether all the traveling and the being away from home was still worth it.

"I was in a place last year with a lot more uncertainty. But there's still always doubts in my mind about, like, how long can I realistically do this? With the travel and everything and constantly putting your body through the wringer," Shiffrin said.

At this point, it's still worth it. "And I feel like I still have a lot of fast skiing I can do. I don't know how long it's going to be that way, but for now I'm definitely a bit more certain that I want to be doing this than I was last year at this time." □

Federer set to miss Wimbledon, dreams of 1 more Slam final



Switzerland's Roger Federer leaves the court after losing to Poland's Hubert Hurkacz during the men's singles quarterfinals match on day nine of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, Wednesday, July 7, 2021.

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — Roger Federer does not expect to return from his latest knee surgery in time for next year's tournament at Wimbledon.

The 40-year-old tennis great, who has won a record eight titles at the All England Club, said in an interview published Wednesday in Switzerland that it

wouldn't make a big difference to him if he was to return in 2022 or 2023.

"The truth is that I'd be incredibly surprised to play Wimbledon," Federer told the Tribune de Genève daily. "At 40 or 41 years old, it's the same."

Federer did say that he still wants to play in one more Grand Slam final.

"I believe in this kind of miracle," said Federer, who has played in 31 major finals and won 20 of them. "In sport, miracles exist."

Federer said the task of making a comeback would be clear only after several more months of steady rehabilitation from this latest operation in August.

Wimbledon starts on June 27, and Federer has not played on tour since a

straight-set loss in the quarterfinals at the All England Club in July. Within a few weeks of that match, he underwent his third knee surgery in 18 months.

Federer has won 20 Grand Slam singles titles, tied with Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal for the most ever for a man.

"Let's be clear, my life is not going to fall apart if I don't play another Grand Slam final," he said. "But that would be ultimate dream to get back there."

"I want to see one last time what I'm capable of as a professional tennis player." Federer explained the motivation for his latest surgery was to protect his future quality of life rather than tennis.

"I had this operation to be

able to ski with my children, play football or tennis with my friends in the decades to come," he said.

Federer said there was never a possibility of playing at the Australian Open in January in the first Grand Slam tournament of the season.

"And that's no surprise," Federer said. "We knew before the operation that this type would require a months-long break."

Federer said he gave the interview to send a message to his fans who "deserve to understand my mood and my hopes." "They deserve better than the image left during the grass-court season this year," said the Swiss great, whose last match ended in a 6-3, 7-6 (4), 6-0 loss to Hubert Hurkacz on the Centre Court. □

Surprising teams on wrong side of Week 10 blowouts in NFL

By **JOSH DUBOW**
AP Pro Football Writer

It was another blowout-filled weekend in the NFL, only this time several of the teams on the losing end were teams near the top of the standings.

For the second time in four weeks, six games were decided by at least 21 points, the first time that has happened twice in a season since 2009 and just the fifth time ever.

Five of the six teams on the wrong side of those lopsided games were teams that entered the weekend with a .500 or better record, with Atlanta losing 43-3 to Dallas, Las Vegas falling 41-14 to Kansas City, the Rams losing 31-10 to San Francisco, Arizona getting beat 34-10 by Carolina and Cleveland getting knocked off 45-7 by New England.

The other blowout was far more predictable: the struggling New York Jets getting beat 45-17 by Buffalo.

This marked just the second time in NFL history that five teams that came into the week without a losing record got beat by at least 21 points, according to Sportradar. The other came in Week 17 of the 2009 season, when many of those teams were resting key players ahead of the playoffs.

Blowouts have been extremely common so far this season, with the 24 games decided by at least 24 points tied for the second most through 10 weeks since the merger, trailing only the 29 in 1975.

RARE ROOKIES

The Patriots got impressive production from a pair of rookies in their win over the Browns, with Mac Jones completing 19 of 23 passes for 198 yards and three TDs and Rhamondre Stevenson rushing for 100 yards and two TDs. New England became the fifth team since the merger to have one rookie throw at least two TD passes and another run for two TDs in a game.

The others were the Browns in 2018 (Baker Mayfield and Nick Chubb), Cowboys in 2016 (Dak Prescott



Cleveland Browns quarterback Baker Mayfield (6) sits on the bench after an apparent injury during the second half of an NFL football game against the New England Patriots, Sunday, Nov. 14, 2021, in Foxborough, Mass. The Patriots defeated the Browns 45-7.

Associated Press

and Ezekiel Elliott), Washington in 2012 (Kirk Cousins and Alfred Morris; Robert Griffin III and Morris), and Denver in 2006 (Jay Cutler and Mike Bell). Jones' 142.1 rating in the game was the fifth-highest single-game passer rating by a rookie quarterback in the Super Bowl era with at least 20 attempts, trailing only two games from Mayfield, one from Prescott and one from Geno Smith in 2013.

LONG DROUGHT

The Lions came close to winning at Pittsburgh for the first time since the Ford family bought the team in 1961. Detroit had nine losses and one tie on the road against the Steelers since their last win in 1955 at Forbes Field before settling for another tie on Sunday. □

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